

Thanassis Cambanis

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Short bio

Thanassis Cambanis is an author, journalist and senior fellow at The Century Foundation. He is co-director of TCF's foreign policy program. His work focuses on U.S. foreign policy, Arab politics, and social movements in the Middle East. He is currently writing a history of the Iraq war and its transformative impact on the international system. He has published single-author books about Hezbollah and the Egyptian revolution, and has edited four collections of policy research about rights, politics and security in the Middle East. He regularly contributes to *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Atlantic*, *The Nation*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy* and other publications. He teaches at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

Professional

2011 – Present	THE CENTURY FOUNDATION, Senior Fellow Research, edit and publish reports, analysis and commentary about U.S. foreign policy, developments in Arab region for progressive, non-partisan New York-based think tank. Principal investigator for initiatives on rights and citizenship in the Middle East; Iraq; religious politics; and previously, for Syria conflict analysis and Arab politics and security project.
2007 – Present	FREELANCE WRITER Regular contributor to <i>The New York Times</i> , <i>The Boston Globe</i> , <i>The Atlantic</i> , <i>The Nation</i> , <i>Foreign Policy</i> , <i>Foreign Affairs</i> , and other publications.
2000 – 2018	THE BOSTON GLOBE, Journalist <i>Internationalist column</i> , 2010 to 2018. Monthly foreign affairs column for Ideas section. <i>Foreign correspondent</i> , 2003 to 2007. Iraq bureau chief and regional Middle East bureau chief. Covered US invasion of Iraq, Arab regional politics, Lebanon-Israel war, Hamas, Islamist political movements.

Single-author books

2023	THE WAR THAT BROKE THE WORLD Harper Collins Forthcoming history of how the Iraq war transformed the international order for trade publisher HarperCollins' Dey Street imprint.
2015	ONCE UPON A REVOLUTION: An Egyptian Story Simon & Schuster Non-fiction narrative book about the efforts of Egyptian revolutionaries to remake their nation's politics after Mubarak's fall.

2010 A PRIVILEGE TO DIE: Inside Hezbollah's Legions and Their Endless War
Free Press, Simon & Schuster
Non-fiction narrative book on Hezbollah's rank-and-file followers.

Monographs

2019 HYBRID ACTORS:
Armed Groups and State Fragmentation in the Middle East
TCF Press/Brookings Press
Lead author of collectively authored monograph on the evolving role of armed non-state groups in conflict and governance, named one of the best books of 2020 by *Foreign Affairs*. Written jointly with Dina Esfandiary, Sima Ghaddar, Michael Wahid Hanna, Aron Lund and Renad Mansour.

Edited volumes

2019 CITIZENSHIP AND ITS DISCONTENTS:
The Struggle for Rights, Inclusion and Pluralism in the Middle East
TCF Press/Brookings Press
Lead co-editor of volume exploring new ways to promote inclusive rights and belonging, rather than religious, ethnic or other identity, as the basis of rights and belonging in the Middle East, including work from 21 contributors. Authored individual essays on universal rights and Iraqi nationalism.

2018 ORDER FROM ASHES: New Foundations for Security in the Middle East
TCF Press/Brookings Press
Co-editor of volume on regional security architecture in the Middle East, including work from 18 contributors. Authored individual essay on Hezbollah, Israel, and UN mediation.

2017 ARAB POLITICS BEYOND THE UPRISINGS:
Experiments in an Era of Resurgent Authoritarianism
TCF Press/Brookings Press
Lead co-editor of volume exploring Arab politics in the wake of the 2011 uprisings. Recruited 22 contributors around shared research question. Authored individual essays on extension of politics into nontraditional spaces, and a Beirut anti-sectarian reform movement.

Selected policy publications

2020 Redefining Citizenship, Security, and Stability
With Sarah Mokh, article in *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 2, Spring/Summer 2020.

- 2019 Arab Revolutions Have Adapted. Unfortunately, So Have Regimes.
TCF Report
- How Are Ideologies and Cultures Changing in the Arab World?
Chapter in *Seven Pillars: What Really Causes Instability in the Middle East?*
(AEI Press, 2019)
- Social Engineering in Samarra
Chapter in *Citizenship and Its Discontents* (TCF Press, 2019)
- Reviving the Quest for Universal Rights
Chapter in *Citizenship and Its Discontents* (TCF Press, 2019)
- 2018 The Israel-Hezbollah Channel
Chapter in *Order from Ashes* (TCF Press, 2018)
- Can Militant Cleric Moqtada al-Sadr Reform Iraq?
TCF Report
- 2017 People Power and Its Limits
Chapter in *Arab Politics Beyond the Uprisings* (TCF Press, 2017)
- 2016 The Case for a More Robust U.S. Intervention in Syria
TCF Report

Teaching

- 2009 – Present ADJUNCT PROFESSOR,
Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs
Created and taught “Writing About War” for graduate students in security policy and media concentrations. Supervised group research projects for policy clients in Capstone Courses. Advised independent study.
- 2010 – 2012 ADJUNCT PROFESSOR, New School Graduate Program in International Affairs
Created and taught seminar “Talking to Terrorists” in graduate policy program. Advised independent study and theses.
- 2008 – 2009 FERRIS PROFESSOR OF JOURNALISM, Princeton University
Taught “Writing About War” as visiting Council for the Humanities professor.

Education & Languages

- 2013 — 2018 ARABIC LANGUAGE STUDY, Lebanese Arabic Institute
Intensive private language study (three times weekly) with tutor: Lebanese colloquial, media Arabic, and Modern Standard Arabic
- May 2000 PRINCETON UNIVERSITY, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs
Master in Public Affairs, International Relations, with Distinction. Graduate Fellowship provided full tuition and living expenses grant for two years of study.

May 1996 UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL
Bachelor of Arts, double major History and Creative Writing. Highest Honors, Phi Beta Kappa. Editor-in-chief of award-winning campus paper, *The Daily Tar Heel*.

LANGUAGES: Fluent Greek and French. Intermediate Arabic (studied Modern Standard Arabic and colloquial Levantine). Functional Spanish.

Group work

2017 — present MIDDLE EAST RIGHTS & CITIZENSHIP PROJECT
Commission, edit and conduct collaborative research into citizenship, rights and belonging in the Middle East, as principal investigator of multiyear project at The Century Foundation, funded by the Henry R. Luce Foundation. Supervise two full-time researchers in-house, coordinate 10-member working group.

2015 — present ARAB POLITICS & SECURITY PROJECT
Commission, edit and conduct collaborative research into Arab politics and regional security as principal investigator of multiyear project at The Century Foundation, funded by Carnegie Corporation. Coordinate research and contributions from more than 40 outside researchers.

2010 — 2012 GRADUATE RESEARCH TEAMS, COLUMBIA SIPA
Supervised, mentored and edited work of graduate research teams producing policy research for think tank clients as part of SIPA's CAPSTONE COURSES. Teams of six to ten students produced reports and briefings for clients including the Center for American Progress and The Century Foundation. Projects focused on local governance by Islamist political parties and U.S. diplomacy with terror-listed non-state actors.

Honors & Fellowships

2013-14 RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, CAMES, AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT
Conducted research as associated at AUB's Center for Arab and Middle East Studies.

2013 DISTINGUISHED YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD, UNC
Recognized as alumni under age of 40 "whose achievements have brought credit to the University," by UNC Chapel Hill General Alumni Association

2010 WRITING HONORS
Nominated for Pushcart Prize, 2010; Best of Longform, 2010 for essay "The Decisive Ones" in *At Length*.

2009 – 2010	<p>NEW IDEAS FUND FELLOW</p> <p>Fellowship from New Ideas Fund in Washington, D.C. for research project into American policy toward engagement with terrorist-designated organizations.</p>
2007 – 2011	<p>WOMEN'S REFUGEE COMMISSION, International Rescue Committee, New York</p> <p>Member of Media Advisory Board, which supports organization's communications strategy.</p>
2006 – Present	<p>PUBLIC LECTURES & MEDIA</p> <p>Extensive experience delivering lectures and appearing on public panels to specialist, government and general interest audiences. Gave talks on Hezbollah and Middle East politics at the Center for American Progress, Politics and Prose, the International Peace Institute, Princeton University Woodrow Wilson School, New York University Global Affairs program, Columbia School of International and Public Affairs, Georgetown Policy School, many other. Have addressed government agencies on foreign policy topics. Extensive appearances on radio and television to analyze US foreign policy and events in Middle East.</p>
1992-1996	<p>DUKE POWER FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP</p> <p>Full tuition and living expenses for any four-year college or university in the Carolinas.</p>
2006, 2003	<p>PUBLISHER'S EXCELLENCE AWARD, The Boston Globe</p> <p>For coverage of Iraq invasion in 2003, Lebanon war in 2006.</p>